ER-3-1395

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29 July 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR: MR. FRANK G. WISNER

SUBJECT : Rand Report

1. To arrive at an opinion as to the desirability of launching a satellite vehicle for reconnaissance as proposed in the Rand Report involves three basic considerations:

a. Feasibility.
b. Estimate of effort required.
c. Value of benefits.

2. Since all three of these considerations are, at this stage, matters of opinion, we have obtained the opinions of a group of leading scientists and engineers to supplement our own findings. This group includes DuBridge, Bacher, Lauritsen, Greenstein, Killian, Hall, Watson, Zacharias and Wiezner.

3. All concerned agree that it is possible and feasible to construct a rocket to be propelled at sufficient speed to place it in a suitable orbit around the earth with the development of existing knowledge. Likewise, all agree that it is feasible to equip the rocket with power plant, control, television, etc. by development of existing knowledge. There is definitely a question, however, as to the possibility of ever being able to obtain recognizable images of objects of a size less than 100 ft. at the proposed orbit distance of say 350 miles.

4. Although such a rocket and its equipment are considered to be feasible, the task of bringing it into being should not be under-rated. It would require a major effort, we estimate, of 6 to 8 years in time and between a half and a billion dollars of 1952 dollars, with corresponding absorption of critical technical manpower.

5. The benefits to be derived from the existence of a number of satellites giving us pictures of the order of resolution of 100 ft. is largely a matter of speculation. It will give us some weather information and some area intelligence which is somewhat beyond our province to evaluate, but we wish to point out that better reconnaissance and better

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information could be obtained with far less effort and cost by, for instance, high flying jets (flight at 50,000 ft. altitudes is now possible and at such altitudes, detection is very unlikely).

6. We realize that it can be argued that over-flying a nation is a breach of neutrality, on the other hand, the launching of a satellite which will some day come back to earth in anybody's country may be considered to be a breach of international law--at any rate, it may be ammunition for propaganda.

7. We have no way of evaluating psychological value or effects, and must leave this phase to others. We do believe, however, that the Agency should give consideration now to this aspect of the project to be prepared for future developments.

8. Based on our knowledge and experience, we do not recommend the project be started at this time, but believe study should continue, especially along the lines which will be useful in general rocket motor development and instrumentation. //

9. It is our present understanding that the Air Force has not abandoned the project, and there seems to be no call for this Agency to carry the project. //

25X1

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DD/I ROUTING

| No. | | |
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| 1 | Mr. Becker | EB |
| | Mr. Drain | |
| 2 | Mr. Davidson | |
| | Mrs. Johnson | |
| | Mr. Hassell | |
| 3 | File Exec Reg. | |
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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

# OFFICIAL ROUTING SLIP

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| TO | | INITIALS | DATE |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | ADCI | | 12/8 |
| 2 | ADNE | | 14 Aug. |
| 3 | ADSI | | 23 Aug. |
| 4 | ADRR | | 27 |
| 5 | Exec. Reg. | | |
| FROM | | | DATE |
| 1 | DDI | | 8/11 |
| 2 | | | |
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REMARKS: re our recent talk on Putnam

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# ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

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25X1

**FROM:** [redacted]
OTS/DD/P - 2-c-71 Quarters I

NO. ER-3-1395

DATE JUL 29 1952

| TO | ROOM NO. | DATE REC'D | DATE FWD'D | OFFICER'S INITIALS | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Mr. Wisner | 226 Admin. | | 30 July | | DDCI: 25X1 |
| 2. DDCI | | | | | Pursuant to your suggestion, Admiral [redacted] and Dr. [redacted] have examined 25X1 into the question of the feasibility and effectiveness of a satellite vehicle. You will recall that this was a point raised by certain members of the PSB staff in the form of a recommendation that this government should devote the necessary priority to such a project. In the course of their inquiry, Admiral [redacted] and 25X1 Dr. [redacted] talked to the individuals 25X1 mentioned in the second paragraph, who are believed to be the most knowledgeable American scientists in the field. This list includes top-ranking scientists from Cal Tech and MIT, as well as the Office of Naval Research, etc. Dr. DuBridge is a Director of 25X1 the Rand Corporation. |
| 3. DDI | | | | | |
| 4. | | | | | |
| 5. | | | | | |
| 6. | | | | | |
| 7. | | | | | |
| 8. | | | | | |
| 9. | | | | | The conclusions of Admiral [redacted] 25X1 and Dr. [redacted] are set forth in the 25X1 attached memorandum and are, in general, quite negative. Admiral [redacted] enlarged upon the contents of para. 7, stating that in his opinion the adverse psychological effect would possibly outweigh the favorable effect. Hostile propaganda would certainly seize upon any such effort as this on our part as a further act of American aggressiveness and intimidation. Mr. Palmer Putnam of the PSB maintains the other side of this argument. |
| 10. | | | | | |
| 11. | | | | | |
| 12. | | | | | |
| 13. | | | | | |
| 14. | | | | | |

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